

IMPORTANT NOTICE

PAPER FOOD STAMP COUPONS WILL EXPIRE JUNE 17, 2009

Although Alaska Quest cards have been used to deliver Food Stamp Program benefits for several years, some of you may have a few paper food stamp coupons left. Retail food stores are required to accept paper food stamp coupons from you. However, the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 has set an expiration date for paper food stamp coupons.

After June 17, 2009, you will no longer be able to use paper food stamp coupons and stores will no longer be required to accept them. If you have paper food stamp coupons you must use them to purchase eligible food items before June 17, 2009. **After close of business on June 17, 2009, paper food stamp coupons will no longer have any value and cannot be used to purchase food items.**

GETTING CASH CHANGE WHEN USING FOOD STAMP COUPONS

At this time, retail food stores are directed not to provide recipients food stamp coupons as change in paper coupon transactions.

Instead of providing food stamp coupons as change, retailers may provide cash change of up to (but not exceeding) \$0.99 cents in a paper food stamp coupon transaction. This is only allowed in a paper food stamp coupon transaction; it is NOT allowed in EBT transactions.

Example of a paper food stamp coupon transaction involving change:

Purchase amount is \$ 1.56
Client presents two \$1.00 paper food stamp coupons
Cash change of \$0.44 cents may be provided.

Retailers can also ask that you buy more food items up to the amount of paper food coupons that you have. For example, if you buy \$3 worth of food and present a \$5 paper coupon, the retailer may request that you purchase more food so that you spend the \$5 food coupon or purchase more food in an amount equal to \$4.01 so that the cash change due would not equal more than \$0.99 cents.

If you do not wish to allow for either option above, retailers may refuse the sale.

ACCEPTING FOOD STAMP COUPONS

The Food Stamp Program regulations prohibit retail food stores from accepting loose \$5 and \$10 paper food coupons which have been removed from the coupon books prior to the time of purchase. The purple \$5 and green \$10 coupons must be presented along with the book cover which bears the same serial number as the coupons. The coupons may be loose as long as you have the cover with the same serial number as the coupons and the coupons have not been cancelled or endorsed by another retailer.

If you have any questions about using your paper food stamp coupons, visit the Food and Nutrition Service website at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/> or call your local Division of Public Assistance office.